



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

January 8, 2008

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK:  
APPROVAL OF POLLWORKER BONUS  
(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS)  
(3 VOTES)**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Approve a bonus of \$75 to pollworkers who serve all three major elections in 2008.
2. Encourage county employee participation in the County Pollworker Program for each of the three Statewide elections scheduled in 2008.

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) continues to experience significant challenges in recruiting and retaining a sufficient number of skilled pollworkers. The growth of the County Pollworker Program has helped to alleviate shortages to a large extent. Since the program's inception in 1998 the County has benefited from County employees serving 24,893 times.

However, as the number of registered voters we serve continues to grow, recruiting and retention difficulties are expected to be particularly acute, especially in 2008 with an unprecedented number of major elections: February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary Election; June 3, 2008 State Primary Election, and November 4, 2008 General Election. Each of these elections will require a minimum of 22,000 pollworkers. Offering a \$75 bonus to pollworkers who work all three elections will ensure repeated service among a large base of volunteers as well as consistent and dependable pollworker teams.

**Difficulty Recruiting Pollworkers to Serve in Primary Elections:** It is especially difficult to recruit pollworkers for primary elections. Having two primaries in 2008 will bring particular challenges. Primaries are typically not as "visible" as General Elections; therefore, potential pollworkers are not as disposed to serve. Additionally, there is usually a lower voter turnout meaning the day is not as exciting for most pollworkers who prefer to be busy on Election Day. Finally, procedures for implementing primary elections are increasingly complicated (see below).

Board of Supervisors  
GLORIA MOLINA  
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE  
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
Third District

DON KNABE  
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

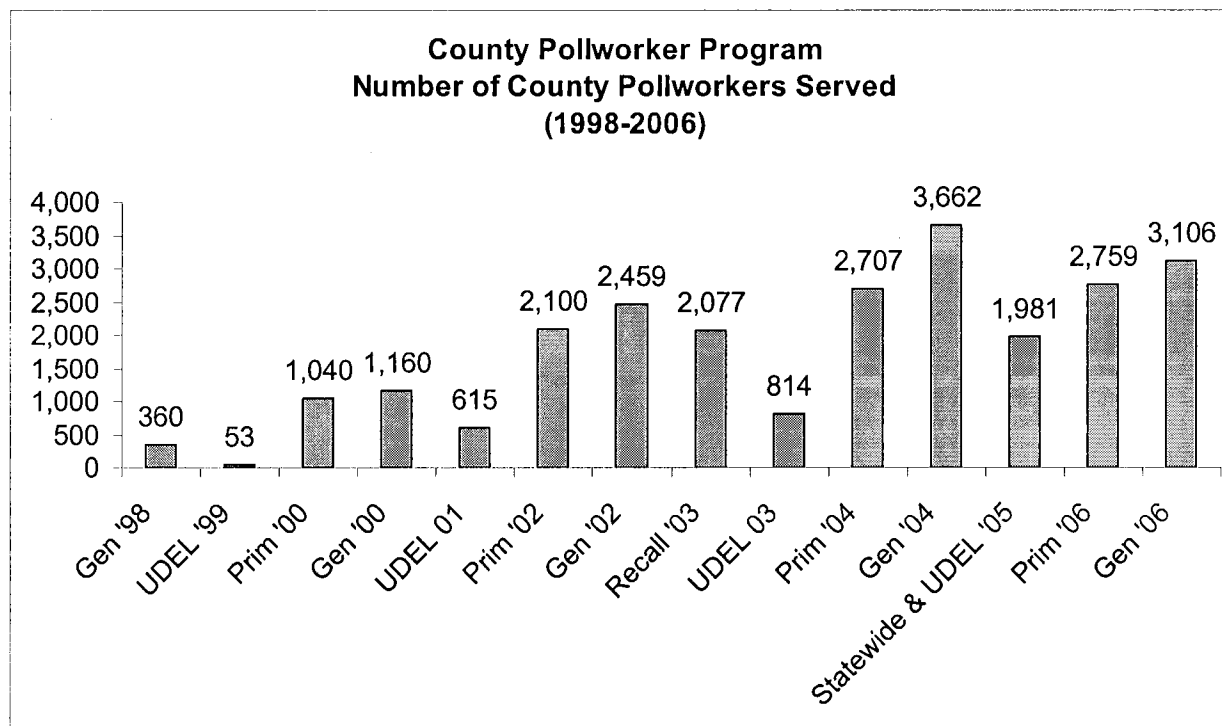
**Increasing Complexity of Election Day Procedures:** Pollworkers are dropping out in large numbers because of the long hours required and the increasing complexity of Election Day procedures. California has adopted a "Modified Closed Primary" system which restricts voters affiliated with a political party to choose only candidates of that political party. Under California law, political parties may determine whether to allow non-partisan voters who declined to state a political party affiliation when they registered to vote the opportunity to cast a ballot for their party's candidates. The RR/CC has developed an extensive training plan for assisting pollworkers in understanding the "Modified Closed Primary" system since its introduction in 2002 but the pool of pollworkers continues to diminish based on the difficulty of implementation. An incentive to work three elections that includes two primaries will greatly assist the RR/CC's ability to fully staff county polling places and provide the level of excellence our County's voters deserve.

**Cost Effectiveness of Bonus:** A significant percentage of the RR/CC's pollworker recruiting budget lies in recruiting individual pollworkers on a continuous basis for each election. There will be savings in terms of staff labor when pollworkers commit to serving three elections, thereby avoiding the need for "fresh" recruitment of new workers each election.

**Importance of Continuity of Teams:** Pollworkers have consistently expressed strong interest in working in consistent teams. Working in teams begins to establish routines that build on the strengths, competencies and preferences of the various members. The proposed bonus plan will facilitate more cohesive and consistent teams.

**Renewed Commitment to the County's "County Employee Pollworker Program:"** The County Pollworker Program (CPP) was formally adopted by your Board as a permanent program in 2001. To ensure that the RR/CC has a sufficient number of County employees with excellent customer service skills as well as demonstrated ability to learn and implement complicated procedures, we are asking for a renewed commitment from County departments in encouraging staff and managers to serve. Additionally, bilingual County employees who serve as pollworkers play a critical role in our compliance with the United States Voting Rights Act minority language provisions.

The CPP has served as a model in counties across the United States and is a major focus of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's (EAC) "Successful Practices in Pollworker Recruiting, Training and Retention" Guidebook (July 2007). Statistically, County employees are more likely than traditional pollworkers to show up on Election Day and serve at no extra cost to County departments. County Employee Pollworkers are redeployed to the RR/CC on Election Day and receive a pollworker stipend in recognition of the extra hours served. FLSA is not incurred because the work is "occasional and sporadic."



The CPP has greatly benefited over the years from assistance from the Chief Information Office and Internal Services Division in supporting online communications to advertise and manage the program. The RR/CC appreciates this assistance and will work with these departments to maximize the online program marketing and management toward the 2008 elections.

#### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The recommended actions are consistent with the principles of the Countywide Strategic Plan Service Excellence, (Goal 1): to provide the public with easy access to quality information and services that are both beneficial and responsive; and Fiscal Responsibility, (Goal 4): to effectively manage and utilize available financial resources.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

The RR/CC has set a goal to recruit at least one-third of pollworkers to serve in all three 2008 Statewide elections. With this goal, the cost of the three-election bonus is expected to be \$544,500 to be paid to participants in December 2008. This cost will be partially offset by a decrease in overtime and/or temporary staff retained for last minute and less efficient recruiting techniques. The remaining cost will be absorbed within the RR/CC's fiscal year 2008-09 election budget.

**FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

County Counsel has determined that FLSA overtime liability is not incurred due to the occasional and sporadic nature of this work.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES/PROJECTS**

There is no impact on current County services. Approval of recommended actions will enable RR/CC to recruit and retain sufficient number of skilled pollworkers for the three upcoming Statewide elections scheduled in 2008.

**CONCLUSION**

Upon Board approval, please return one original stamped copy of the approved Board letter to the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,



WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

WTF:SRH:RDC  
GS:JY:ap

c: County Counsel  
Department of Human Resources  
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk